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THE CONSOLIDATED TRANSLATION SURVEY OPERATION
OF FOREIGN DOCUMENTS DIVISION, OO

The Consolidated Translation Survey is a central coordinating facility operated by the Foreign Documents Division in cooperation with the translation agencies of the Intelligence Advisory Committee. Its main purpose is the prevention of duplication of effort in the exploitation of foreign-language publications by the intelligence community.

Currently operated under authorization of the "coordination" provision of the National Security Council Intelligence Directive No. 16, of 7 March 1953, the Consolidated Translation Survey (CTS) developed from a modest start based on the obvious need for such service.

Initiatory exploration for IAC cooperation in the CTS concept was undertaken as early as November 1947. Department of the Army was early interested in the effort and before a year elapsed lists of translations anticipated, in process, or completed were also being received monthly from ONI and A-2 on a purely voluntary cooperative basis.

The way was thus paved for FDD immediate response to an AD/O directive included in a definition of FDD function of 3 September 1948, to coordinate with CIA offices and other government agencies in the continuous exploitation of foreign-language material. Card files, cross-indexing the three or four thousand items accumulated to date, were set up. On 25 April 1949, the Departments of the Army, Navy and Air concurred in a memorandum of the Director of Intelligence, Department of the Army, to the Director of Central Intelligence, requesting that steps be taken by Foreign Documents Division to formalize such coordination among the services.

Under the division's reorganization of August 1949, provision was made for further organization of the effort and expansion of cooperation to include all areas of the IAC and to publish monthly listings of the reported translations in process or completed. The first listing was published for October 1949 in a 17-page report listing 234 items.

From its small, part-time beginning, the CTS has grown to where its files currently cross-index approximately 74,000 items on about 242,000 cards. The monthly "SECRET" publication, averaging 115 pages, lists more than 900 items and is disseminated to 300 consumers of the intelligence community.

There are now 19 units of the IAC membership cooperating in this coordination effort and in addition, all available listings of other governmental, institutional, industrial, and commercial translations as well as those of [redacted] are obtained for incorporation into the Consolidated Translation Survey so as to make it the most effective means of avoiding duplication of translation from foreign languages into English.

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The operation has proven economically sound. Representing an annual salary outlay of \$15,535, the CTS in this calendar year through October has prevented 15,328 pages of potential duplicatory translation within the IAC. Taking \$5 per page as a modest average for translation cost, this represents \$76,640 savings, of which \$20,535 may roughly be attributed to CIA and the remaining \$56,105 to the rest of the IAC. In 1954, duplication prevented amounted to 10,377 pages valued at \$51,885, of which \$7,985 could be allocated to CIA, and \$43,900 to others using the service.

While it is impossible to maintain a record of other duplication prevented by consumers' reference to the monthly publication, which would not then come to our attention, it may roughly be estimated to be an additional amount paralleling the figures above.

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